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*[Handwritten signature]*

I hereby certify that the correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service with sufficient postage as first class mail in an envelope addressed to Mail Stop Amendment, Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450, on December 27, 2004.

PATENT

Attorney Docket No. 16683-1-2

TOWNSEND and TOWNSEND and CREW LLP

By: *[Handwritten signature]***IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE**

In re application of:

GERALD BLATT

Application No. 09/289,000

Filed: February 25, 1997

For: JOINT TREATING METHOD

Customer No. 20350

Confirmation No. 8112

Examiner: Paul B. Prebilic

Technology Center/Art Unit: 3738

AMENDMENTSan Francisco, CA 94111  
December 27, 2004Mail Stop Amendment  
Commissioner for Patents  
P.O. Box 1450  
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

Sir:

As a precautionary measure, applicant requests an extension of time, if needed and if not separately attached hereto, and authorizes the Commissioner to charge the fee therefor to our deposit account in accordance with our standing authorization for such charges.

In response to the Office Action dated September 24, 2004, please enter the following amendments and remarks:

**Amendments to the Claims** are reflected in the listing of claims, which begins on page 2 of this paper.